

**Appendix B**  
**Work and Family Best Practices**

## **WORK AND FAMILY BEST PRACTICES**

Work and family best practices are innovative programs have been initiated by employers across the country to address the multitude of newly emerging issues confronting today's workforce. These employers recognize the importance of implementing family-friendly programs and policies. They also have a clear advantage in recruiting and retaining the most qualified employees, as well as report a significant boost in employee morale and productivity.

Best practices most commonly implemented by employers are: childcare services; elder care services; expanding the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA); and, offering flexible/alternative work schedules.

### **CHILDCARE**

Finding high quality, reliable, and affordable childcare can be difficult for working parents. Resource and referral services can help match employees with appropriate and available childcare providers, taking into consideration the special needs of each family. Resource and referral services also can help develop childcare resources in an area if no appropriate childcare exists. Some public sector employers across the United States offer referral services, including Pierce County in Washington. In the private sector, a collective bargaining agreement between the Communications Workers of America, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and U.S. West, a telecommunications company, mandated that U.S. West establish a resource and referral program for dependent care and appoint a dependent care manager. The program offers both childcare and elder care information to all 50,000 U.S. West employees and began June 1, 1999.

#### Resource and Referral Service

One model for referral and resource service options can be found at IBM. As the Corporate Reference Guide to Work and Family Programs stated:

"Despite knowing that in the public mind, building onsite childcare centers was the solution to employee childcare needs, IBM maintained that the rate they would be able to build such sites throughout their entire business community would be too slow. They opted instead to consult with the experts and establish the expectation that a referral and resource service would be able to address all care issues or assist in the identification of unmet needs. IBM wanted to ensure that their employees would not be disappointed to learn that most centers in their immediate area were already full with waiting lists, so they established the expectation that "resource building" would also be an integral component of the service. IBM employees call the firm's local agency and answer a list of questions that assist the agency in identifying a site to meet the needs of the employee. The employee then receives a written confirmation of the names and addresses of possible childcare providers with openings. Additionally they are provided with the guide to state licensing requirements and a childcare handbook with a checklist to assist them in their final selection. Six to eight weeks after forwarding this information, the agency makes a follow up call to the employee to evaluate the usefulness of the service."<sup>1</sup>

### Pre-Tax Program

A Dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP) or a Flexible Spending Account allows workers to set aside a portion of their earnings, up to \$5,000 annually, in a tax-free account for dependent care expense reimbursement. The only cost to the employer is plan administration. Although pre-tax programs are considered a best practice, such a benefit is readily available in both public and private sector employment. The State of California offers this benefit through the Flex-Elect Program.

### Childcare Funding

A childcare fund offsets the high cost of childcare, by providing reimbursement for childcare expenses or payment directly to a childcare provider. In the public sector, the National Treasury Employees Union and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services negotiated a \$10,000 fund for a pilot program for childcare subsidies to their lower-income employees. This first childcare subsidy in federal government, takes advantage of legislation allowing federal agencies to use appropriated funds to subsidize childcare for employees. In the private sector, the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Local 2 negotiated an agreement beginning in 1994 where hotels contributed 5 cents per worker per hour to help with caregiving. The established labor/management committee disburses the funds, with the union having the final approval regarding disbursements. In subsequent negotiations, the hourly funding rate was increased to 15 cents per hour and in the year 2004, the amount will be increased to 20 cents per hour.

In this instance, solutions to the problems of affordable, available and odd hour care are complicated by the fact that the group speaks a total of 11 different languages. Considerations for future bargaining include direct subsidies, supporting family daycare homes, encouraging centers to open longer hours and offering resource and referral services in most of the 11 languages. More information regarding this benefit is discussed later in this report under "Examples of Successful Labor/Management Initiatives."

Another private sector employer, the Food Employer's Council, negotiated a similar childcare funding program with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 770.

### On-site Childcare Centers

On-site childcare centers are sometimes established at the place of business in order to meet the needs of working families. This can help reduce commute time for employees as it eliminates an extra trip to an offsite childcare provider. It also provides peace of mind to employees knowing their children are nearby. Some employers and unions have negotiated for on-site childcare centers. However, establishing one is a costly and time-consuming process. Before developing and implementing care centers, employees who would potentially use the facilities should be surveyed to ensure the facilities would meet their needs.

In the public sector, New York State Employees Union, in concert with its employer, has established on-site childcare centers in 50 locations for state workers, in addition to a host of other family friendly policies, which were established and are monitored by a joint labor/management oversight committee.

Johnson & Johnson, a comprehensive health care company, operates very successful onsite childcare programs for employees at its worldwide headquarters and three other sites in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The company established the first onsite facilities as the result of a needs survey sponsored in 1988.<sup>2</sup>

### Near Site Childcare

When on-site care is not desired by the employees or is not practical due to space constraints, near site childcare centers can also provide some of the same benefits of on-site care. The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers negotiated with Boeing Co. for a pilot child development program which, in coordination with the union, consists of near site childcare centers and enhanced referral assistance. Another aspect of the program targets parents whose children do not utilize the near site centers, but need assistance with care during extended/alternate hours, referrals, and/or evaluation of other facilities and curriculum.

### Centers with Extended Hours

Many employees' work schedules require varying hours or days off. For these parents, securing reliable, quality childcare can be stressful and nearly impossible, not to mention very expensive. An example of how this was successfully addressed is illustrated in the efforts of a coalition of labor unions, community groups and employers in Burlingame, California. Palcare is an innovative non-profit childcare program created to meet the pressing need of quality, affordable childcare for families with non-traditional and changing work schedules. It was created in direct response to the particular needs of airport employees, whose jobs span 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. A partnership of airport unions, the San Mateo Labor Council, the San Francisco International Airport, United Airlines, San Mateo County, a local hospital, and the child care referral agency worked together on a solution. They conducted two surveys of airport-related and hospital employees to determine the actual needs for childcare. The center is licensed to serve 150 children at any one time from the ages of three months to five years. Families with changing work schedules can submit a new childcare schedule every month that fits their work hours.<sup>3</sup>

Another way employers can help meet the varying childcare needs of its employees is by developing a childcare consortium that can be used by all employees as needed. One employer and union created a consortium that developed childcare programs available in the daytime, before and after school and during holidays and vacations. The consortium also had an emergency backup telephone network to provide care for families whose regular providers were unavailable.

### Before and After School Care

Many working parents need childcare before 9 a.m. and after 5 p.m., including before and after school hours and during extended hours when parents are working alternate shifts. In one example, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 715 and Santa Clara County worked with the local YWCA and a local school district to use a vacant building at the school for childcare. The school's enrollment was declining, so extra space was available for such a facility. In exchange for using the school, the union and employer agreed to encourage parents who used the center but did not necessarily reside in that school district to also enroll their children in the school full-time.

### Emergency and Sick Childcare

Backup care can be provided for mildly sick children, on days when normal care arrangements fall through, or in other unusual situations, such as snow days. Parents of school-age children may also need short-term childcare during summer vacations and on holidays. Backup care can be provided through a special program, such as employer subsidies for in-home care, or a backup center, or by allowing parents to use their sick time to care for sick children. In one example, Alameda County and the Alameda County Employees Labor Coalition/SEIU Locals 535, 616 and 790, negotiated a childcare fund to provide reimbursement to parents whose children were mildly sick or who, for some other reason, were unable to utilize their normal childcare provider. The employees received reimbursement for 90 percent of their childcare costs, up to \$80 per day, to a maximum of \$350 in any calendar year. Some employers also provide referral services for centers which allow drop-in childcare.

Another public sector example is the city of Mesa, Arizona, which employs 3,276 people. In July 1995, it contracted with a private childcare service to offer in-home sick childcare services to all full-time workers. Mesa, Arizona, subsidizes an amount up to 10 hours per day for up to 5 days of care per fiscal year. Employees who use the service must pay a fee, plus a small transportation fee, and an additional \$5 per day per additional ill child receiving care. This program allows parents of mildly ill children to stay at work and preserve their accrued sick leave. While program utilization had not been high, the cost has been half of what would have resulted from employees taking time off to care for mildly ill children.<sup>4</sup>

### Holiday/Summer Childcare

Parents whose school age children often need short-term care during school vacations, holidays, or summer breaks. The Communications Workers of America/International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers negotiated with Bell Atlantic for on-site childcare, provided by the employer, for school age children on short-term breaks. Under the pilot program, the employer established such a center at nine work locations for the 1995-96 school year. By the 1996-97 school year, the program had expanded to include on-site care centers at 15 work locations.

### Subsidized Childcare

Employers and unions have negotiated subsidized slots in existing childcare centers that help reduce the costs of childcare. The subsidy is a sliding scale based on the employee's salary. Johnson & Johnson contracted with three national childcare companies to give its 34,000 domestic employees a 10 percent discount at affiliated centers nationwide. The company also started a pilot program at its New Brunswick, New Jersey location by establishing a network of two licensed family day care providers. Johnson & Johnson subsidized these providers' fees on a sliding scale based on family income.<sup>5</sup>

## **ELDER CARE**

Finding high quality, reliable, affordable elder care can be difficult for working people. Resource and referral services can help match employees with appropriate and available care providers, taking into consideration the special needs of each family.

### Pre-Tax Program

Consistent with the description of Dependent Care Assistant Programs for childcare, DCAPs can be utilized to pay for elder care expenses as well.

### Elder Care Fund

An elder care fund directly offsets the high cost of dependent care. Funds provide direct cash payments or a reimbursement by the employer for elder care expenses. The childcare fund described earlier which was established by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 2 also provides reimbursement for elder. Members can receive up to \$150 per month to offset the expense of caring for an elderly parent.

### Family Leave

Time off to care for an elder or another dependent is a commonly used solution for working families' elder care needs. In one agreement reached between United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, Local 2324 and United Front Child Development Program, employees are granted up to one year of unpaid leave to care for an ill or injured family member. While on leave, the employees continue to receive health benefits for up to three months and continue to accrue seniority.

### Support Services

Some employers and unions work together to provide information and support to address members' elder care needs. This strategy can help working people with elder care responsibilities to make informed decisions about elder care strategies and reduce personal stress. Such services include: counseling; information and referral services; seminars; support groups; handbooks and videos; work and family committees, etc. The Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE) maintains a network of retired employees who offer assistance to other retired employees and their families. Services include telephone calls, visits, and respite care and escort services for errands and medical appointments. Members participating in the program are reimbursed for expenses and paid a small stipend.

### Long Term Care

Long term care can be provided directly, either through the union or by the employer. This is typically a form of insurance that assists in meeting the financial requirements for adult daycare, home health services, skilled nursing care, and/or custodial care. The State of California, through CalPERS, offers such a program to PERS members. Because it is a self-insured product, the rates are much more reasonable than those generally available in the commercial market. Insurance can be purchased for employees, spouses, parents, and parents-in-law during an annual open enrollment period. There is also legislative interest [Assembly Bill 2281 (Alquist), California Legislative 1999-2000 session] to make the cost of long term care insurance tax deductible.

## ENHANCED FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Some best practices include enhanced leave provisions which allow employees to utilize paid or unpaid time off to cover absences for general family-related issues. In addition, under federal law, the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) allows those who work for companies which employ 50 employees or more to take an unpaid leave of absence for up to 12 weeks, with a guaranteed right to reemployment, for the employee's own illness or to care for an ill family member, as defined by the law. Such leave may also be used to care for a newborn or a newly adopted child. Best practices include enhanced benefits which provide for paid leave for family related matters, extended leave beyond the 12 weeks stated in the law and expanded definitions of family for the purposes of the application of the FMLA.

### Paid Time Off

There are legislative efforts in various states to provide paid leave. The U.S. Department of Labor recently released regulations allowing states to adopt legislation to use unemployment insurance funds to pay for family leave. There is pending legislation in several states to do this. The state of Connecticut recently passed legislation for this purpose. Other states are exploring the use of state disability or other funds to provide paid family leave.

### Part-time Return to Work

Many new parents want to work part-time after the birth or adoption of a child. Northern California Newspaper Guild Local 52 and the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *San Francisco Examiner* negotiated a contract allowing a new mother or father to work part-time until his or her child is in kindergarten.

### Short-term Leave Usage

Working families often need the flexibility to take time off work in short increments, varying from a partial hour, to a day or two. The United Auto Workers (UAW) and Michigan Blue Cross-Blue Shield negotiated paid time off for school participation, which can be utilized in one hour increments. Up to eight hours of such leave is available each calendar year. In California, the Family School Partnership Act allows employees to take up to 40 hours of unpaid leave per year to attend school activities for their children.

### Emergency Leave

Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW), an affiliate of the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees and Service Employees (AFSCME) International Union, and Harvard University agreed that paid release time may be available for members' brief absences to cope with emergencies, utilizing sick, vacation or personal time.

### Leave for Victims of Domestic Violence

AFSCME and SEIU bargained with the State of Massachusetts for leave time (from 1994 to 1997) for members who were victims, or whose children were victims, of domestic violence. Members were allowed to take up to 10 days each year for legal and other services.

## Stress Leave

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 399 and Hope Community Mental Health Care Center in Los Angeles, negotiated one day of paid stress leave after one year of service, two days after two years, and three days after three years, and in each year thereafter.

## **FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES**

Flexible work schedules allow employees to utilize flexible scheduling to accommodate family and other personal demands. Following are some examples of flexible work schedules.

### Flextime

Flextime agreements allow employees to start and end work during some range of hours. All employees may be required to be present during a core period, usually during the middle of the shift. In one example, Communications Workers of America and BellSouth Telecommunications negotiated an agreement in which each employee must be at work during “core hours,” which cover 60 percent of the normal workday. However, each employee may vary beginning and ending times within basic scheduling guidelines.

### Compressed/Flexible Workweek

Compressed work schedules allow full-time workers to work weekly hours in fewer than five days per week. Two common examples of are: four 10-hour days for an extra day off per week, or eight 9-hour days and one 8-hour day for an extra day off every two weeks. Compressed work weeks are common in both private and public sector employment, including the State of California.

### Part-time Benefits

Part-time work can give flexibility to take care of family needs while still earning a paycheck. However, a part-time schedule may become unaffordable if it does not come with health care and other benefits. Unions have bargained to provide part-time employees with benefits. In one example, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 1245 and Pacific Gas and Electric negotiated an agreement in which part-time employees were granted pro-rated benefits commensurate with the hours worked. Pro-rated benefits included vacation allowance, sick leave, paid holidays, and medical, dental and vision insurance coverage.

### Telecommuting

Telecommuting is working from a site other than the central worksite, usually at home. Under the terms of the 1999-2002 collective bargaining agreement between UAW and Michigan Blue Cross-Blue Shield, the employer and union agreed to a pilot program specifically for its customer service representatives which would allow for some employees to work at home through telecommuting. Employees participate on a voluntary basis and all wages, benefits and contractual terms are in effect. The union maintains joint oversight of the pilot program under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement.



### Job Sharing

Under a job share agreement, two part-time employees share one full-time job. The two employees divide the full-time salary between them according to hours worked. Benefits and seniority are often pro-rated according to hours worked, although in some job share situations, both may receive full benefits and/or seniority. An example is in the City of Phoenix, which has 14,000 employees and was recognized nationally as the best managed city in the country, for offering job-sharing positions. Most of Phoenix's family-friendly work policies have been developed through collective bargaining, in a city with about 63 percent of its employees are represented by unions.

### Shift Swap

A shift swap provision allows workers to voluntarily exchange shifts or workdays to accommodate family needs such as attending school events or medical appointments.

### Making Overtime Voluntary

For many working families, being forced to stay at work past the regularly scheduled end time can be very stressful. Many working parents do not have backup arrangements for childcare, or cannot afford backup care. Making overtime voluntary can protect employees from this loss of power over their daily schedules.

### Shorter Workweek

Some employers and unions have bargained for shorter workweeks for workers with full compensation. Some employers and unions also have negotiated shorter workweek provisions with less compensation as an alternative to layoffs. Voluntary reduced time allows an employee to reduce the number of hours worked in a week in order to have extra time to take care of personal or family needs.

In France, workers have reaped economic and social rewards from the new 35-hour workweek, which became law February 2000, for companies with more than 20 employees. Supporters say the law has already helped create jobs and more free time. Unemployment has fallen steadily since the government announced its 35-hour initiative in October 1997. The labor movement was concerned about lower paid workers losing money with the reduced workweek. However, the intent of the law was to include a payment system that guarantees minimum wage workers no loss of pay and the 35-hour workweek would be linked to a reduction in payroll taxes for low and medium salaried workers.

## **EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL LABOR/MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES**

Following a review of best practices in the area of work and family issues, several examples of collaborative efforts were discovered. This report highlights what can be accomplished when employers, employees, and unions unite to develop viable options within their specific work environments. The purpose of providing these brief snapshots of programs offered across the nation is to illustrate successes and generate discussion and consideration of the vast opportunities that are available, with careful planning to state employees. These descriptions are not comprehensive, are reflect a "point in time" perspective for current and future consideration in program options for state employees.

### Harvard Clerical Union

Through collective bargaining the Harvard Clerical Union has achieved the following successes over the last ten years:

- Childcare subsidies for before and after school care.
- Paid maternity leave up to 8 weeks.
- Paid leave for fathers and adoptive parents of one week.
- A subsidy of up to \$5,000 for adoption legal bills.
- Approximately 500 employees with flexible work schedules.

### Health and Human Services Employees Union, 1199, SEIU, New York City

In 1989, a significant percentage of 1199 members identified childcare as a priority when they were surveyed in preparation for contract negotiations. The union won contract language calling for the establishment of a childcare fund. This trust fund, with its Board of Trustees, was set up in 1992, with 17 work sites contributing. The Board is by law, comprised of equal numbers of labor and management members; currently, the Board is comprised of 26 members, with several subcommittees (e.g., program development, training, funding options, etc.). By 1998, the number of contributing work sites grew to 184, of which 100 were represented by the same union. Each work site has its own labor/management committee. At smaller work sites, a committee may be comprised of only two members, one each from labor and management. Management members are appointed, usually from the human resources arena. Labor members are volunteers. Some committees meet regularly and others only once a year.

Each employer contributes 0.3 percent of the gross payroll to the childcare fund. These monies are for the exclusive use of employees at that work site. Employees then apply for benefits and are selected based on seniority and benefit history, with those having recently received benefits being placed at the end of the waiting list. About one-third of the 200,000 members have children within the appropriate age range and, thus, are eligible for benefits under the program. Approximately 10,000 children are served by the fund each year.

Some of the benefits and programs available through this fund include:

- Voucher disbursement for child care (pre-school age children) and after school care;
- Saturday cultural arts program, collaborating with other institutions;
- Holiday program, during each of the three one-week holiday periods;
- Summer day camp;
- Saturday and summer programs for teenagers; and a
- Resource and referral program.

### HERE Local 2 and the San Francisco Multi-Employer Group

In 1994, using the 1199 model, the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) International Union Local 2, negotiated the creation of a child and elder care fund to which each employer would contribute five cents per hour worked. In subsequent negotiations, this amount increased to 15 cents per hour, and in 2004, will go up to 20 cents per hour. With only 8,000 members, this Local is much smaller than 1199, and as such has a more modest program. A Board of Trustees, made up of management and labor members, oversees this fund, as well as other benefits. A child/elder care committee, also comprising union and

management members, reports to the Board. Currently, 1,950 subsidies are available. The subsidies range from \$150 per month for elder care to \$225 per month for childcare and also include \$400 per year for older children during non-school periods.

## **HOW TO IMPLEMENT A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM**

The initiatives that are successful are those that empower the workers to meet management on a level playing field, are funded adequately, and sources for future funding are explored and/or identified. The committee works cooperatively, respectful of differing opinions and mindful of the big picture, which is to improve the lives of workers and enhance their ability to be productive.

Within the private sector, there were overriding principles that were present in some form, across successful programs. These principles, in sum, provide an excellent guiding framework for employers that are beginning the journey to enhance work and family, or work and life policies and practices, thereby becoming a family-friendly workplace.

According to a report published by the Government of Western Australia, the key characteristics for successful work and family programs must be:

- Consistent with the short- and long-term objectives of improving workplace flexibility, productivity and efficiency by integrating programs into the employer's business plan and human resource policies;
- Tailored to suit the needs of the business and its employees;
- Adaptable to meet the changing needs of the employer and employees;
- Supported by managers and supervisors;
- Available to both male and female, married and single employees who all have family responsibilities;
- Clearly explained so that employees are informed of the options available, the rules and conditions that apply, and the benefits which are expected by the employer;
- Well promoted to encourage employees and supervisors to make use of the flexible work practices;
- Not too disruptive to normal work requirements;
- Not risking any occupational health or safety standards for the employer or employee or employees;
- Measured and evaluated to ensure benefits are being achieved; and,
- Monitored and reviewed to meet the changing needs of the employer and employees.<sup>6</sup>

Maintaining guiding principles while having flexible programs is also important.

In 1992, Chicago Area Partnerships formed to provide a forum for a varied group to examine, discuss and devise innovative work and family programs. The Partnership, comprised of women and civil rights organizations, federal contractors considered leaders in affirmative action, and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, focused on cutting-edge equal employment opportunity/human resources issues, as well as shared creative and voluntary approaches to already existing programs and policies.<sup>7</sup> The guiding principles covered:

- Leadership/Management
- Accountability
- Communications
- Employee involvement
- Recruitment
- Development of potential
- Supportive policies and programs
- Systems evaluations
- Continuous improvement<sup>8</sup>

#### Leadership/Management:

The paradigm shift starts at the top of each organization. Directors must reiterate the expectation that managers and supervisors have an obligation to be sensitive to the needs of their work force and maintain a high degree of flexibility. Department policies and procedures must include the value of diversity, and provide for flexibility in how their goals and objectives are met, specifically in the areas that impact their employees directly. Managers and supervisors should receive ongoing training, as well as attend forums where problem solving measures can be safely discussed so that supervisors exercise creativity in addressing their employees' needs.

#### Accountability

Once policies are established, managers and supervisors must be accountable to maintaining the spirit and intent of such policies. One tool for implementing accountability may be integrating this expectation within the performance review process of managers and supervisors. Coupled with this is the expectation that employees will ensure policies and procedures that reflect flexibility in business operations are followed, and employee workload and business commitments are kept in order to make the entire system function fairly and appropriately.

#### Communications

Maintaining open communication is imperative to the success of implementation of programs. Departments must ensure that their employees know what benefits exist, keeping them informed of changes and related issues immediately. Managers and supervisors should adopt the attitude that they are there to assist State employees to avail themselves of all possible benefits, and should serve as a resource and advisor as needed. Before changes are made to specific operation procedures, communication with those impacted regarding the proposed changes and understanding of the impact is important.

#### Involvement By Both Employer And Employee

In line with the expectation to keep communication channels open, both the employer and employees need to be involved in decision making as appropriate. Employees and management should strive to generate business decisions at the lowest level possible and to build ownership and pride in the organization at all levels. Solid working relationships between employee organizations and management help to foster collaboration and maintain an environment of information sharing and consensus building.

## Recruitment

Departments must emphasize desirable work environments to stay competitive with the private sector. Many private companies are recognized for their efforts in recruiting talented staff. Many of these same companies have implemented flexible and family friendly benefits that address the demands facing today's diverse workforce. State government must successfully address recruitment enhancements and retention strategies. In addition to providing employees an opportunity to participate in the decision making process that directly impacts their quality of work, managers and supervisors need to canvas their employees often to ensure that the programs and benefits offered are reflective of the majority needs.

## Development Of Potential

Departments should have a well-integrated approach to providing upward mobility opportunities to its employees. Managers and supervisors must assist employees in identifying ongoing training programs and promotional opportunities. Networking and mentoring programs need to be put into place and should be made readily available to all employees. Employees should be recognized for their contributions and held to fair expectations for performance.

## Supportive Policies And Programs

The presence of work and family/life policies that allow employees to best balance their personal and professional demands is essential.

## Systems Evaluations

Use of benefit programs needs to be monitored periodically so that knowledge is obtained as to what is successful and when additional education and development is warranted.

# **EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL WORK AND FAMILY PROGRAMS**

## Allstate Insurance Company

Allstate Insurance Company represents a company that exemplifies core principles in the development and maintenance of their "Life Cycle" work and life program. Life Cycle philosophies have been integrated into the company's work ethics and core competencies, and impact all facets of the company, from their quality improvement program to workforce diversity. The key core competency is valuing people.<sup>9</sup> Allstate's philosophy supports employees by helping them address work and life issues; through this commitment, employees are more satisfied at work; this leads to increased customer satisfaction and improved financial performance; which creates more employee opportunity and greater employee satisfaction.<sup>10</sup>

## GE Aerospace

GE Aerospace successfully changed management culture by appointing 18 work and family coordinators to assist and encourage employees throughout the company in using new benefits and options. The coordinators also ensure that managers understand the business reasons for developing new family-friendly programs and support employees in taking advantage of work-family services and benefits. The work and family coordinators serve as the contacts for employees who need help in locating appropriate child and elder care services.<sup>11</sup>

### Johnson and Johnson

Johnson and Johnson changed its company mission focusing on the effect its policies have on employees' ability to balance work and family responsibilities.<sup>12</sup>

### Xerox

Xerox U.S. Marketing Group is in the process of implementing Work-Family Awareness Training to both sensitize managers to employees' work and family balance issues, as well as help managers better understand and implement their company's work and family programs and policies. The basic training model is typically delivered in one half-day session, utilizing a multimedia approach with pencil tests for immediate feedback.

### Other Companies

According to *Working Mother Magazine*, family-friendly policies have the power to attract star recruits, retain talented employees and boost productivity. In the age of labor shortages and steep competition, companies have learned they must respond to the needs of the changing workforce. In determining the 100 best companies, the following themes emerged:

- They understand the power of flexibility;
- They listen to their employees; and
- They communicate well.

Employees value and expect the chance to work on their own terms. Companies that elect fail to acknowledge this will lose talented employees. Some private sector companies hold managers accountable, tying their compensation to their staff's usage of flexible work options. Ninety-five percent of the best companies surveyed by *Working Mother* survey employees on work and life topics. Eighty-eight percent of the companies have a work/life task force. As a result, the companies had strong employee-driven work/life initiatives. *Working Mother* found all of their best companies communicate exceptionally well to their employees. The companies must inform employees on these programs, and market the benefits repeatedly to all levels of the organization.<sup>13</sup>

### Insurance Companies

As companies become more sophisticated about work/life policies, they continue to gain bottom-line benefits. The comprehensive resource and referral program at Prudential saved the company \$7 million in reduced absenteeism and turnover. CIGNA Insurance Company confirmed that its lactation program reduced new moms' absences by 27 percent. Benjamin Group's on-site childcare and 24-week maternity leave, combined with a company culture that values women's contributions, keep turnover low.

## **CONCLUSION**

The above represent both public and private sector best practices which provide benefits to assist employees in balancing their work and family needs. There are a number of valuable programs, policies, and principles that can be created, adopted, and implemented by the State of California. These examples of private and public sector solutions celebrate the importance and contributions of employees to any organization, and the importance of developing viable work and family programs to meet the needs of the workforce. Addressing employees' work and family needs will be a "win-win" in increased employee morale and higher productivity.

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<sup>3</sup> Alexis M. Herman, *et al.*, page 14.

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<sup>5</sup> Galinsky, *et al.*, page 57.

<sup>6</sup> Government of Western Australia, *Department of Productivity and Labour Relations website*, [www.doplar.wa.gov](http://www.doplar.wa.gov).

<sup>7</sup> Women Employed, *Corporate Best Practices to Shatter the Glass Ceiling*, Chicago Area Partnerships, Pathways and Progress, April 1996.

<sup>8</sup> Women Employed, *et al.*, pages 13-16.

<sup>9</sup> Susan Seitel, *A Report on Best Practices in Work-Life*, Work and Family Connection, Inc., February 1998, pages 2-4.

<sup>10</sup> *Allstate Now*, January 1996.

<sup>11</sup> Galinsky, *et al.*, page 267.

<sup>12</sup> Galinsky, *et al.*, page 12.

<sup>13</sup> *Working Mother Magazine*, February 2000, [www.WorkingMother.com](http://www.WorkingMother.com).



